

INFORMATION REPORT

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

COUNTRY USSR

DATE DISTR. 27 August 1948

SUBJECT Penal Industries in the Kirov
Area (Vetlah Camp System)
25X1A6a

NO. OF PAGES 3

PLACE
ACQUIRED [REDACTED]

NO. OF ENCLS. 1 sketch map
(LISTED BELOW)

25X1A2g

DATE OF INFO [REDACTED]

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

25X1X6

1. The railroad which runs through the Velah concentration camps, which lie approximately 250 kilometers northeast of Kirov, was begun in 1937 as an extension of the Yar-Rudnichny line. By August 1946, the line extended approximately 90 kilometers northwest of Rudnichny to Camp 16. The Russians intended to extend the line even further so that a junction with the Kotlas-Vorkuta railroad might be effected.
2. 25X1X6 [REDACTED] between 35,000 and 45,000 prisoners were held in the Vetlah camps in August 1946. [REDACTED] 25X1A6a
3. Exiles permanently established in the town of Rudnichny are employed in the nearby phosphorus mines. The ore is loaded on freight cars and sent by rail via Yar to the interior of Russia. These mines do not come under the jurisdiction of the local penal camp administration.
4. Camp 9 of the Vetlah system contains a lumber mill which employs about 150 workers and 20 to 25 technicians and administrative personnel. The mill, which is powered by electricity, produces planks and railroad ties out of pine, fir, and bireza wood. Camp 9 also employs a special group of 150 prisoners (brigada dlya podgotovki avio lesa). The group is divided into three sections. The first section, consisting of 40 persons, finds, marks, and catalogues bireza trees suitable for processing into rifle butts and stocks, airplane parts, and veneer. The second section, consisting of 30 to 40 persons, fells the trees marked by the first section. The third section does the rough shaping of lumber suitable for rifle stocks.
5. Lumber Mill No. 1 is located between Camp 5 and the town of Lesnaya. It employs 800 to 1,200 workers, 10 to 15 technicians, and 8 to 10 clerks. Two electric generators which are powered by wood-fired steam engines drive the more than twenty machines at the mill. The mill produces planks, railroad ties, and two types of ammunition boxes: .65 to .70 m. by .40 m. and 1.30 m. by .60 m. The ammunition boxes are not assembled in the mill, but are shipped in sections to the interior. Three hundred carloads of lumber are shipped out of the mill every month. This includes 60 to 80 carloads of ammunition boxes.

CLASSIFICATION ~~SECRET~~/CONTROL - U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY

STATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NAVY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NSRB																		
ARMY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AIR																			

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

REFERENCE COPY

~~SECRET~~ DO NOT CIRCULATE

Document No. [REDACTED]
NO CHANGE in Class. ☐
☒ DECLASSIFIED
Class. CHANGED TO: TS S C
DDA Memo. [REDACTED]
Auth. Approved For Release 1999/09/08 : CIA-RDP82-00457R001800480006-8
Date: 5 May 78 By: [REDACTED]

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

- 2 -

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

6. Camp 5, which was directed by one Valkovich in 1946, contains a mill which produces proteins from the fungi which are cultivated in decomposed sawdust and shavings. Large barrels are filled three-quarters full with sawdust, then water is added until it reaches a level 40 cm. above the sawdust, and finally certain acids are added. The sawdust is decomposed by steam until sugar amounting to from 4 to 6 percent of the original bulk is extracted. Fungi are added to the moist sugar, and these grow, multiply, and mature within six to eight hours. Then the fungi mature, they are collected in special filters, and a grey substance, called "drozhzhi" (yeast, ferment) in Russian, is obtained. This thick, yogurt-like mass is used as food for prisoners as a substitute for meat proteins. Three hundred kilograms of "drozhzhi" are produced daily and shipped off to the various penal camps in pottery containers. Approximately 40 workers are employed in the protein plant. Steam is brought to the plant from Lumber Mill No. 1.

25X1A6a

25X1A6a

The production of proteins from sawdust was developed in Germany, where in 1936 it began to be applied industrially. The process was based on the multiplication of protein-rich fungi which were fed with sugar produced from cellulose. The processing of cheap celluloses, such as sawdust and shavings, was accomplished by means of sulphuric acid, which hydrolyzes the sugar. German scientists isolated a special species of fungus which (a) contained the maximum amount of proteins; (b) was rich in all the vitamins useful and necessary for human health; and (c) in contrast to other fungi, was anaerobic. Thus, the cultivation of these fungi did not require much space, and the cost of production was reduced. The Germans used these proteins as food for human consumption. Since the Russians are now using sawdust for the production of proteins, it appears likely that they have engaged German scientists who were doing the same work under the Nazis.)

7. Camp 5 also contains a railroad car repair shop. Work on the construction of the shop began in April 1945; by August 1946, twelve buildings had been completed. Eight of these buildings were two-story structures and measured 16 by 12 meters. The rest had only one story and measured 10 by 8 meters. All were constructed of wood on brick foundations. Plans called for the erection of a total of 22 buildings. About 100 prisoners of war and 300 deportees were engaged in the project. It was stated that the repair shop would be in operation by the beginning or middle of 1948.
8. A flour mill is located 1.5 kilometers south of the town of Lesnaya. It consists of 10 one-story wooden buildings covering an area 400 meters long and 200 meters wide. The mill employs 90 prisoners, 4 or 5 free workers, and 3 accountants, and operates 24 hours a day. The daily capacity of 24 tons of flour and 10 tons of meal was not met during 1946, since only 450 to 500 tons of flour and meal were produced per month.
9. An oil distillery is located near the above-mentioned flour mill and uses the electricity produced by the mill's power plant. The distillery possesses the following equipment: two metal cauldrons with an estimated capacity of 200 kilograms each; one metal cauldron with a one-ton capacity; one water pump; two coolers; two large casks, each 3 meters by 1.5 meters; and a steam engine which services the distillery as well as the Lesnaya flour mill. Twenty-eight prisoners work at the distillery, which processes pitch obtained from the roots of trees. The pitch is heated in the two 200-kg. cauldrons until it vaporizes. The vapors are then cooled and a heavy oil is obtained. The plant converted 250 to 400 kgs. of pitch daily into 70 to 80 kgs. of motor oil and 40 kgs. of pharmaceutical spirits. The entire production of the plant was consumed by other mills and camps in the area.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~~~CONFIDENTIAL~~~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET/CONTROL~~ OFFICIALS ONLY

25X1A29

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

- 3 -

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

10. Lesnaya is served by an airfield 1.5 kilometers northeast of the town. Two small passenger planes regularly landed there in 1946. They were used to carry mail from Kirov and to transport the administrative personnel of the various penal camps. Within Lesnaya there are two electric power plants which furnish light to most of the penal camps in the district.
11. The headquarters of the Vetlah penal camp system is at Lesnaya. The general director of the camps has full administrative and political authority over the prisoners and over those voluntarily living in the vicinity of the camps. The post of general director was filled by Kuchtikov from 1943 until some time before August 1946, when Levensoi took charge.
12. The administration of the group of camps is divided into the following sections, three of which have section chiefs responsible to the general director:
 - a. Section "A", which is headed by the general director. This section is occupied with general administrative problems and acts on the basis of the Five-Year Plan. It controls and directs the construction and extension of the various camps and supervises the work of the other sections. It also controls the judicial authority and executes all judicial decisions approved by it.
 - b. Section "B" is the personnel section. It keeps the files of all prisoners in the Vetlah camp system and prescribes the suitable employment of inmates according to their previous experience and capabilities. It observes the activities of each prisoner after he reaches the camps, and this record is available for review by the judicial authorities. The section receives and checks new arrivals, removes from the rolls those who have died, and gives the necessary documentation to those who leave the camps in accordance with orders from higher authorities. The section also looks after the indoctrination and training of the prisoners.
 - c. Section "C", which was under the direction of one Volskii in 1946, controls the law enforcement personnel and the secret police and sees to the security of the camp system. It places spies among the prisoners and among the free citizens who live in the vicinity of the camps. It brings to court all cases involving violations of the law or breaches of discipline, as well as prosecuting workers whose production records have fallen below the norm.
 - d. Section "D" constitutes the guard section and directs the activities of 600 to 800 troops and a pack of 40 to 60 trained dogs. The guard is commanded by an officer who is usually one of the aides of the general director.
13. Attached is a sketch showing the location of camps in the Vetlah system.

~~SECRET/CONTROL~~ OFFICIALS ONLY~~CONFIDENTIAL~~~~SECRET~~

SECRET/CONTROL

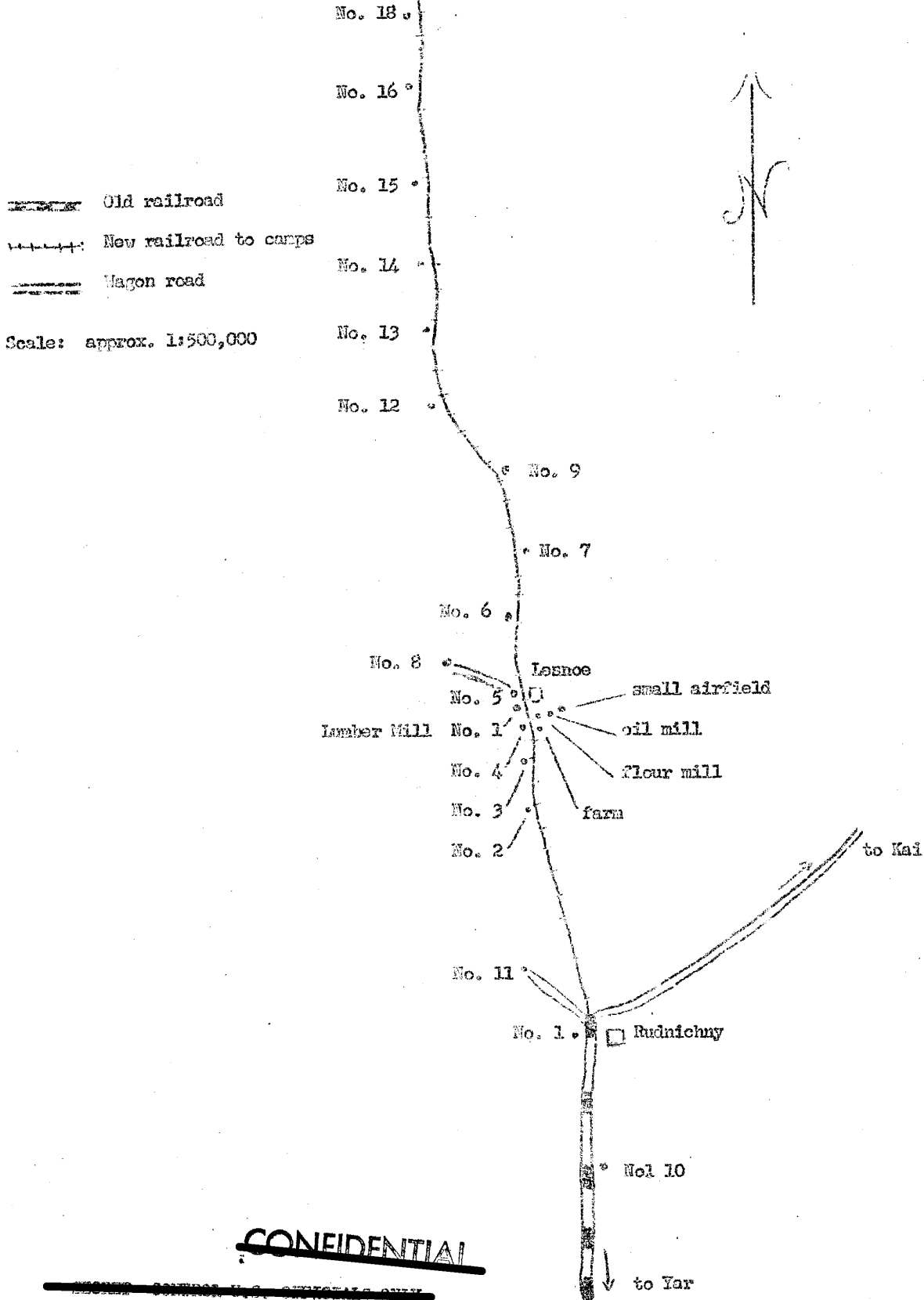
~~SECRET~~

25X1A2g

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
ATTACHMENT I

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

WITLAK CAMP SYSTEM



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~